



## Deep Blue Adventures A Diver's Story

Deep Blue Adventures (Deep Blue) was started in 2003 by two local dive instructors and purchased, in late summer of 2007, by Larry Gamble, who is President and CEO. Deep Blue is a one-stop dive center offering a wide range of scuba classes, dive vacations and retail equipment sales. Deep Blue is a full service training facility and provides classes ranging from basic certification to technical diving instruction, along with associated diving equipment, and offers over 100 specialty training courses. Deep Blue places a strong focus on customer service and provides continuing education classes after the initial certification. They encourage their students to continue diving by offering specialty programs tailored around the student's own unique interests.

Larry is currently serving on active duty with the US Air Force. He plans to retire in Franklin and become more involved in local scuba diving and recognizing Deep Blue as a stable and growing business that is emerging as the dominate dive center of Southeastern Wisconsin, Larry decided to purchase the business.

Deep Blue has two locations, one in Milwaukee on Capitol Drive and one in Franklin at 76<sup>th</sup> and Rawson. Both stores are growing and increasing market share in their targeted communities. The Deep Blue Dive Team incorporates a broad range of experiences in SCUBA diving, marketing and strategy, operations, business development, and finance. Each member of the team has worked in private and public companies, has focused on creating value for companies and providing a return to partners and investors.

Larry has been an active diver since 1982. After he earned his PADI Open Water Certification in college at the Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, he joined the Citadel Scuba Club and frequently dove in the rivers and ocean near Charleston, South Carolina. After graduating, his travels with the US Air Force provided him opportunities to dive in some unique areas of the world including the Azores Islands, both sides of Panama and several locations in the Caribbean.

Deep Blue is a two-time winner of the Dive Equipment Marketing Association's "Council on Retail Excellence" Award. Winning the award in 2006 and 2007, Deep Blue earned accolades as one of North America's Top-10 Dive Centers. To find out more about Deep Blue, visit their website at <http://www.dpblue.com/about.asp>.

SBA was able to assist Larry fulfill his desire to pursue his interest in getting more involved with scuba diving through SBA's Patriot Express Loan Program with funding for the purchase of Deep Blue. The Patriot Express Loan Program has new and enhanced programs and services for veterans, active-duty service members eligible for the military's Transition Assistance Program, service-disabled veterans, reservists and

National Guard members, the widowed spouse of a service member or veteran who died during service or of a service-connected disability, and current spouses of any of the above. Larry is the first recipient in the State of Wisconsin to utilize SBA's Patriot Express Loan program that was offered by SBA's participating lender Guaranty Bank in Milwaukee.

Larry's guiding philosophy is to "never stop learning." Obviously, a good philosophy for anyone! SBA is extremely proud to have been able to be of assistance to Larry as he embarks on his new undertaking with Deep Blue.